REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR JOHN REYNOLDS 14th JULY

Supreme Court Ruling

On 31 May 2012, the Supreme Court ruled in favour of the Council in the case of KM vs. Cambridgeshire County Council. In the Judicial Review, lawyers acting for KM challenged the Council's offer of an annual care package of £85,000 for KM, who has a range of serious physical and mental disabilities. The judges rejected the appeal, ruling that the Council had acted reasonably in making the offer. In passing judgement, the Court said that councils should make it clearer to service users how proposed care packages could meet their needs. The local government press have noted that this will increase transparency in the way councils present offers of care.

CQC Care Quality Commission Inspections

Two centres operated by Provider Services have recently been subject to unannounced inspections by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). The inspections took place at Alder Close in March, and Jasmine House in Ely. We are pleased to report that, in both cases, the CQC found that all inspected standards were met. Full reports will be available in due course.

Supporting older people to live independently

The Council is considering options to improve housing support for older people to ensure that resources are available to all those who need support. Currently, only those living in sheltered housing can benefit from support enabling them to live independently. For every person living in sheltered housing there are a further 19 older people without access to housing support services. Following Cabinet's decision to extend Supporting People sheltered housing contracts for a further 12 months, the Council is exploring options for re-modelling and expanding the service to include those living in the wider community. A Project Board with representation from a wide range of partners has been established. A public consultation will be taking place with older people already receiving a service as well as with the wider community to find out what services older people need in order to continue to live independently. This project will be a key contributor to the Adult Social Care prevention strategy, and has a strong connection to the
"Community Navigator" initiative.

Stroke project

Eleven events were completed in May during 'Action for Stroke Month.' Manned information stands were present at Addenbrooke's and Hinchingbrooke Hospitals, in libraries throughout Huntingdonshire, and at a Cambridge Minority Ethnic Employee Network event. The current work in support of the implementation of the National Stroke Strategy includes increasing prevention awareness, initially in Huntingdonshire; and work to be completed in schools/colleges and with GP Practices. This work will re-emphasise the initiatives commenced during the 'Strategy Project' including Books on Prescriptions, development of local support groups, completion of designated training, and exercise provisions. Other initiatives include work on Early Supported Discharge; a review of the Stroke Journey in conjunction with NHS Midlands and East; work on Joint Health and Social Care Plans; and development work with the Library Service on possible peer support information sessions.

It's All About Us

Mick is 70 and uses some of his Personal Budget to employ someone to take him to a disabled fishing lake once a week. Tim and Annie use their Personal Budgets to enable them to live independently, and Fran employs a personal assistant and someone to help her achieve her goal of a Gold Medal for Great Britain at swimming in this summer's Paralympic Games. Theirs are just some of the stories of local people featured in the film *It's All About Us!* The stories are designed to encourage individuals with a Personal Budget, who may have taken all or part of this as a Direct Payment, to think outside of traditional social care when putting together a plan for their support.

Cambridge North West (University and Orchard Park Developments)

University Planning Application: The target date for the Joint Development Control Committee (JDCC) to determine the application is August 2012. A further report to Cabinet will be required to agree the final s106 package prior to JDCC consideration and may impact on the JDCC target date. Orchard Park: Work continues to progress the s106 and how the developer funding will be allocated. Planning applications are under consideration with member decision in the summer.

Cambridge Southern Fringe

Bell School – The inspector has dismissed the appeal against refusal of the Bell School access design. The inspector raised concerns in relation to visibility for pedestrians. A revised design is anticipated to be submitted to respond to the inspector's comments.

Clay Farm – Pre-application discussions for the sites off Long Road are continuing. The Cambridge Fringes Joint Development Control Committee has raised concern with regard to the distribution of affordable housing.

Northstowe

It is anticipated that the Development Framework will be considered by the Northstowe JDCC ahead of the Phase 1 application (Development Framework – July 2012. Phase 1 – possibly Autumn 2012).

Cambridge science park station

Ecological surveys have commenced and discussions are taking place with Network Rail regarding a partnership for working and access for intrusive surveys. Discussions have commenced with DfT regarding the form of the agreement for franchisee repayments.
The planning scoping document has been submitted, and design work has started for the road access and busway extension. Schematic plans and programme have been circulated to local members.

Ely Crossing

Further Network Rail meetings are due to produce a full understanding of all the various rail work programmes in the area and to agree the Network Rail financial contribution towards the scheme based upon the closure of the level crossing. An English Heritage (EH) site meeting went well, but there are still issues to be resolved in terms of the setting of the cathedral. EH will now report to their national advisory board. Local business interest in the scheme is beginning to emerge and there is general support for a solution, but most want to see the detailed proposals. Liaison with local land owners is ongoing.

Cambridge Rail Station bus interchange (Hills Road)

Three remaining bus stops in the new interchange went live in June which gives space for the remaining cycle stands to be installed outside the station. An independent audit of internal space for the multi-story cycle park will be undertaken by Sustrans (developer to pay fee).

Better Bus Area Funds

The County Council secured £1.72m of Government funding to help improve the accessibility and reliability of buses through the Better Bus Area Fund. A BBAF Programme Board will be overseeing the delivery of the programme.

Local Sustainable Transport Fund

Some £5m of funding has been secured from the Government's Local Sustainable Transport fund. This funding should help us to deliver enhanced access and links for around 70% of commuters to Cambridge and key employment sites in South Cambridgeshire, including bus and rail stations in Cambridge, the Busway and ultimately linking to the new town at Northstowe, and the Alconbury Enterprise Zone and to the new Cambridge Science Park Station at Chesterton, due to be completed in 2015. A programme will be widely published to provide updates on when the elements will be consulted on.

Bike Friendly Cities

2 Seas: The Bike Friendly Cities initiative started on 1 July 2011 and is a three year project to work collaboratively with European partners to develop innovative cycling infrastructure and to promote cycling. The Cambridge News Big Bike Ride is being organised with Cambridge News/Press Relief for July 8 2012 along with a 201km countywide challenge ride.

Transport Strategy for Cambridgeshire

A long-term transport strategy for Cambridgeshire, which will also include Rail issues, is being developed as part of the work we are getting underway with partners and the Joint Strategic Planning Unit. This will align with work to develop a (non-statutory) Long Term Strategy for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. The first meeting of the Member group who will be leading this work will take place early in July.

Low carbon energy bid

Cambridgeshire, South Cambridgeshire, Cambridge City, Huntingdonshire and Peterborough City have signed a consortium agreement to collaborate in the project and the final round of negotiations with the EU funding agency has been concluded. A contract will be signed for the funding late June / early July. 75% of the project costs will be funded by the Intelligent Energy Europe Programme. One of the biggest challenges, especially for small and medium-sized local authorities, is to prepare sustainable energy projects which are large enough to be considered investable by financing institutions and/or suitable for EU financing facilities. Our project responds by bundling nine smaller projects together - focusing on increasing energy efficiency of public sector buildings and council homes, and low carbon energy generation - to reduce their risk and increase their attractiveness. Investments include two district heating schemes, retrofit of social housing with microrenewables and other energy efficiency measures in schools and public buildings.

Long term transport strategy for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire

The Transport Strategy will help to provide clarity for future plans for transport and accessibility for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire and will, at the same time, inform the preparation of the Local Planning Authorities' development plans in an integrated way. The new Transport Strategy will also be setting a longer-term vision for transport and help secure funding to deliver infrastructure. It is proposed to cover the time period for the Development Plans and consider a longer-term context to 2050. There is also a commitment to scope out issues related to rural transport as part of the strategy. This will also consider latest from CFT work as well as looking at other models such as Suffolk's model of Demand Responsive Transport as well as other Community Transport options. The consultation document 'Issues for a new transport strategy for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire' has now been published and public consultation is taking place at the same time as Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council are consulting on their Local Plan Issues and Options reports. The consultation will run from 15 June to 28 September 2012. A draft transport strategy is expected to be consulted on in spring 2013.

A14 progress

The go ahead from DfT for the doubling of the size of the St Ives Park and Ride site and for providing six VMS signs on roads leading from Cambridge and Huntingdon warning of congestion on A14 has been given. This expenditure is authorised by the £20m special funding allocation from the Treasury to begin to address current congestion problems on the A14. The completion of the A14 Corridor Study is expected in summer 2012. There is also the need to prepare a plan in consultation with Government for the potential funding of the wider A14 scheme. This could include grants, tolling, LA contributions and EU grants.

Adult Learning and Skills

As a lead practitioner on the national Learning and Skills Improvement Service register, Adult Learning and Skills held a successful dissemination event on 12 June to broaden involvement in an improvement project to prepare to support other adult learning providers on their improvement journeys from 2013.

Community Learning Trust Pilot

The Adult Learning and Skills Service has bid to be a pilot in the new model for delivering Community Learning. The trust model is not a formal change of legal status but a mechanism to involve our local communities and partners in planning a locally led curriculum. The Cambridgeshire Community Learning Trust (CCLT) will be a community led, provider backed partnership. Our model will be a 'hub and spoke' structure with the four existing district Community Learning and Skills Partnerships linking to an Adult Learning and Skills Board. The CCLT will consist, at a local level, of partners from the local providers - voluntary, statutory and private plus local councils and special interest groups. The four Partnerships are each chaired by a voluntary sector provider and supported by an officer of the County Council responsible for community learning. The local groups will produce a plan for community learning using local information and getting feedback from the local community. Some projects are already delivering a legacy. For example, the CCC devised and funded Volunteering at Events project, operational throughout Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Volunteer Centres, has reported on six months of activity. It has secured 167 events and 411 event volunteers 'tagged' on the database (year end targets were set at 50 events and 200 volunteers).

Waste Strategy and Delivery

Work continues with our partners in RECAP to develop a whole systems approach to waste management in Cambridgeshire. This is an example where we are less concerned with the cost to any individual authority but the burden being born by the Council Tax payer. At the moment, an illustrative business case is being developed for presentation to the board in the early autumn. We will be seeking permission and resources to develop a full business case for service changes. Alongside this we are refreshing our waste strategy. Rather that look at it as a whole – given the changes mentioned above – we are focusing on recycling centres, as the need for this is more pressing given the growth agenda and the limited lifespan of some of our sites. Proposals will be taken through full member processes as they are developed.

Protected verges

Following an invitation to all Parish Councils, 11 have taken up responsibility to undertakemanagement of protected road verges. The Cabinet Portfolio holder is to investigate ways in which more Parish Councils can be given incentives to take on this responsibility.

Supporting Businesses and Communities

Currently, the Supporting Businesses and Communities Service is being restructured in light of political priorities and savings targets. The restructure brings together Trading Standards, Arts, Culture, Sport, Olympics and elements of Waste Management. The restructure consultation is likely to take place over the summer months, with a view to going live in the late autumn. Once the new service structure is in place, work programmes will be developed to deliver the new service vision

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Road Safety Partnership

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Road Safety Partnership has been instrumental in driving forward road safety strategy on a joint basis. Given the priority placed on road safety by the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board, and changes in partner organisations, it seems appropriate to refresh and re-launch the partnership. Terms of Reference are being refreshed with the next meeting anticipated for autumn.

Street lighting PFI

A new process of consultation with Parish, District and County Councillors has begun. This allows six months for consultation ahead of any changes being implemented. Four of five planned sessions across the county have already taken place and have been very well-received.

Consultation on the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector

The Council has invited organisations to a special consultation meeting on the Council's Business Plan 2013/14 at Slepe Hall Hotel, St Ives on 18 July. Over 100 representatives have already signed up to attend. We want to explore how community based organisations can play a bigger role in our plans. We want to work more locally and support our communities better by listening to community voices and potentially doing more of our work directly through, and with, community based organisations. This event will be supported by Cabinet representation and will include senior officer inputs from all of the Council's service areas. Our programme on the day will include presentations, interactive workshops and open discussions.

Libraries, Archives and Information

A new library IT system (Spydus) was successfully installed last week, providing an up to date efficient system and improved library catalogue. Whilst disruption to the public services was kept to a minimum, all services are now back up and running. The system has been procured jointly with Suffolk County Council as part of the SPINE partnership (Shared Partnership in the East) with £250k funding secured from Improvement East. The new system will pave the way for improved customer service and efficiency across both counties. Changes have also been made to the Library Service web pages, which have been redesigned based on customer feedback to make them more user-friendly, making it easier for customers to find the information and services they need. The service is now in the final stages of restructuring, with recruitment to professional and support roles currently taking place. Restructuring of the whole service will have saved more than £1m. The new structure is expected to be fully in place from October

Contact Centre

An additional 8 apprentices have started within the Contact Centre, bringing the total for the service to 14.

Emergency Planning

CEMT (Cambridgeshire Emergency Management Team) has now completed and signed off the Offsite Emergency Plan for the Anglia Water Services Site at Grafham Water under the Control of Major Accident Hazard (COMAH) Regulations. The Major Accident Hazard Pipelines plan has also been completed to ensure compliance with The Pipeline Safety Regulations. The three further plans for the COMAH (Control of Major Accident Hazards) sites within Cambridgeshire will be reviewed and completed within the statutory period by the end of the year.

Approved Venue Fire

A 16th century barn at one of Cambridgeshire's ceremony venues, Chilford Hall, was destroyed by an alleged arson attack. The registration service has contacted all the couples who had ceremonies booked to help with appropriate alternative arrangements. Some will continue to have a ceremony at Chilford Hall (who still have some licensed ceremony rooms available, though only for small numbers of guests) while others have chosen to go elsewhere. Chilford Hall was not our most popular venue (only 23 couples had booked ceremonies). Our most popular venue currently has over 160 ceremonies booked; any similar problems there would have created a significant challenge. We have recently visited this venue, including a review of their fire prevention and detection arrangements. We are also working with the proprietors of Chilford Hall to enable them to establish temporary licensed arrangements which can cope with larger parties.

Change of Ceremony Times

It has just been announced that the current restrictions on the time that a marriage ceremony or civil partnership registration can take place will be removed from October 1st 2012. From that date, registration Authorities will have the option to offer ceremonies at times outside the current window of 8am to 6pm. We are currently consulting staff, customers and service partners to inform a decision on what options we may offer.

Scrutiny and Improvement

The Scrutiny and Improvement Manager has worked with colleagues supporting the Business Plan to ensure that Overview and Scrutiny is engaged in the Business Planning process from an early stage. The "Visioning Group" established previously by Overview and Scrutiny Management Group will lead the strategic overview while individual O&S Committees will consider more detailed issues specific to their remit as they emerge. Members and other key stakeholders are currently being canvassed for their views on the Overview and Scrutiny function as part of the Service's Self-evaluation framework agreed at Council last October. This framework is based on a national model developed by the Centre for Public Scrutiny to evaluate the effectiveness of Overview and Scrutiny services. Results will be reported to Overview and Scrutiny Management Group in September.

Access to information

For the period of May to June, a 100% weekly return rate has been achieved across the organisation for Freedom of Information requests over a consecutive period of 9 weeks. Across the same period, around 94% of requests by individuals to access the information the Council holds about them (subject access requests) dealt with by Information Governance were delivered within deadline. There has been a significant effort across the organisation to achieve this. FOI requests continue to be received at a steady rate at an average of around 18 per week, and subject access requests around 9 per month.

Voices Matter (Children in Care Council)

Voices Matter is the name of our Children and the latest meeting was held last week. It is an opportunity for our Looked After Children to hold senior managers and politicians 'to account' in the services that we provide for them. We have the advantage of an inspirational group of young people of all ages, well lead by the participation staff, so we always have a constructive and imaginative conversation together. They also make suggestions on how we can improve our services e.g. information on foster carers and residential homes.

Children's Trust Update

The newly revised Children's Trust Board met for the first time this month and agreed the terms of reference setting out the role and functions of the Board, these include overseeing an annual assessment of needs, informing other partnerships of children and young peoples' needs and setting priorities and direction of the Trust. The protocol between the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) and the Trust Board was updated and agreed.The Board agreed to narrow their focus on 2-3 key priorities where working together will make an impact and improve outcomes for children, young people and families. The emerging priorities are:

- Building capacity in universal provision – this will focus on building capacity in the voluntary and community sector to compensate for decreasing universal services
- Working collectively to map needs of families with complex interactions across partners and identifying some joint partnership work to engage and support these families.
- East European families – understanding the needs and issues experiences in supporting them in order to develop a more strategic, multi-agency response.

The agenda and papers can be found
http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/CMSWebsite/Apps/Committees/Meeting.aspx?meetingID=524

Fostering Service OfSTED Inspection

Ofsted began their inspection of the Fostering Service on 26 June 2012. The inspection is overdue (usually 3 yearly and the last one was in September 2008) so the service is well prepared. That said the focus will be on tracking the child's journey of 20 plus cases and therefore will no doubt identify a range of issues.

Foster Care Fortnight

There has been a positive response, generating 44 direct requests for further information and giving over 200 information leaflets. A ll expressions of interest are being followed up some of which are anticipating will progress onto initial assessments.

Early Intervention Family Workers

Since April 2012, the Parent Support Adviser (PSA) role has been mainstreamed and the process has created a more targeted Family Worker role that will work at a higher level of need. It is anticipated that this shift will leave a gap in provision at the earlier intervention level so, in response Cambridgeshire Primary and Secondary Heads have allocated £710k which was used to fund PSAs to continue to be used to support early intervention family work. Many localities have recruited or are in the process of recruiting to these posts with the numbers in each Locality dependant on need and population.

Cambridgeshire County Council plans to open a new Cambourne secondary school

The scheme is a high profile development being the first new secondary school constructed in Cambridgeshire in 30 years. There is understandably considerable local interest in the scheme; Cambourne residents and Councillors have been lobbying for some time for their own secondary school. The project comprises the construction of a new five forms of entry (5FE) secondary school which will provide a total of 750 places for pupils age 11-16, with associated external works including sports pitches and a new access road. The facility is intended to meet the growing demand for secondary school places within the existing settlement of Cambourne. The current catchment area secondary school for pupils living in Cambourne is Comberton Village College which is now approaching operational capacity and will be full by September 2013. Comberton VC has an excellent reputation for education delivery and the Comberton Village College Academy Trust, is the Council's preferred promoter of the new school. The Academy Trust has submitted a bid to the Department for Education (DfE) to run the new Cambourne Secondary School as a Free School. A decision on this bid is expected to be made by the DfE before the end of this month. If the Free School application is unsuccessful, the County Council will support an alternative proposal that the new secondary school is promoted as an Academy by the Comberton Village College Academy Trust.

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